

November 2, 2003

Sense of the Laboratory OneSC Site Office Team

Introduction:

There are five key questions that are important to an understanding and effective implementation of the “Sense of the Laboratory” concept, these are:

- 1) What is meant by the “Sense of the Laboratory”?
- 2) Why is a “Sense of the Laboratory” needed and how will it be used?
- 3) What is the role of the Site Office Managers in achieving a “Sense of the Laboratory”?
- 4) What is the role of the Office of Science Program Associate Directors in achieving a “Sense of the Laboratory”?
- 5) What are the SC Expectations for the Laboratories?

1) What is meant by the “Sense of the Laboratory”?

The “Sense of the Laboratory” means an awareness and appreciation of Laboratory performance, programs, operations, and conditions so that effective communication and informed decision-making can occur. The “Sense of the Laboratory” must be actively maintained because of the dynamic nature of Laboratory programs, operations, conditions, and associated Laboratory performance and issues.

“Awareness” implies vigilance and has been characterized as the DOE “eyes and ears” in the same way as it has been used in the operational awareness program. Operational awareness involves information collection through a physical presence (the “eyes”) and an active and effective communication (the “ears”) by DOE.

“Appreciation” implies a sufficient level of understanding to be able to reach informed and workable decisions concerning the effective and efficient operation of the Laboratory. Appreciation entails building and maintaining a broad, general knowledge base of Laboratory performance, programs, operations, and conditions. It does not imply sophistication or specialized knowledge.

2) Why is a “Sense of the Laboratory” needed and how will it be used?

The ultimate goal of SC is to advance the DOE and SC missions, in large part through the SC Laboratories unique capabilities and facilities. Successful operation of the Laboratory involves meeting or exceeding established SC expectations. The “Sense of the Laboratory” is needed to ensure a level of detail and understanding is available to SC Management on the performance, programs, operations, and conditions of the Laboratory and its associated M&O Contractor. This information is used to assess the Laboratory and its associated M&O Contractor performance against SC expectations and to identify issues, make decisions, and where appropriate provide direction.

Communicating the “Sense of the Laboratory” to the Director of the Office of Science relies on effective relationships between the Site Office Manager, the SC Chief Operating Officer (SC-3), the Associate Directors of the SC Program Offices, and the Support Center Director. The SC Principal Deputy is responsible for developing a “Sense of the SC Laboratories” at the strategic level. This

includes ensuring that there is a strategic future for each of the SC Laboratories and that there is a OneSC perspective to the portfolio of SC Laboratories. The SC Principal Deputy is responsible for mediating, when necessary, differences among the SC Program Associate Directors, other Laboratory clients, and the operational needs as they relate to the future direction of a Laboratory.

3) What is the role of the Site Managers in achieving a “Sense of the Laboratory”?

The Site Office Managers serve as the single Federal official for Laboratory performance. They have clear line management authority and accountability to integrate administrative and operations requirements into program missions. The Site Office Manager performs these functions in concert with the Director of the Office of Science, the SC Chief Operating Officer, and the HQ-SC Program Offices, who provide policy, direction, and scientific program management. Within this policy, direction, scientific program management, and other delegations of authority, the Site Manager is accountable for prudent decisions and actions that are in the best interests of the U.S. Government. The Site Office Manager is responsible for ensuring the operational and administrative health of their respective Laboratory. The Site Office Manager is also responsible for informing SC Management regularly on Laboratory operations, contract management and how well the Laboratory is effectively performing their science mission. This includes an understanding of the vitality and issues of the science portfolios at their Laboratory. The Site Office Manager needs to have a full understanding of the importance of operations and conditions to the success or failure of carrying out the science mission. An objective is for the Site Office Manager to identify and communicate issues to SC Management to eliminate surprises that distract HQ-SC from accomplishing the SC mission.

The Site Manager represents the Office of Science to the Laboratory and to the respective M&O Contractor for the Laboratory. Having a “Sense of the Laboratory” enables the Site Office Manager to successfully achieve the following assigned Site Office roles:

- 1) Contract Management - setting and communicating expectations, integrating DOE requirements, authorizing and funding work, and providing feedback to the M&O contractor.
- 2) Program Implementation - monitoring operations, reviewing and approving work, and coordinating activities related to assigned programs and projects.
- 3) Federal Stewardship – maintaining and protecting Federal assets.

Some specific examples of how the Site Office Managers and their staff are expected to use the “Sense of the Laboratory”:

- 1) support, modify, approve, or reject proposed Laboratory contract modifications (including any tailoring requirements)
- 2) develop periodic assessments of Laboratory performance and identify issues
- 3) ensure work is reviewed, approved, and authorized in a timely manner
- 4) provide timely status reports to HQ-SC
- 5) respond to questions and issues raised by HQ-SC concerning Laboratory operations, conditions, projects, and programs
- 6) provide early warning to HQ-SC on issues
- 7) ensure more informed communications and interactions with HQ Program Sponsors, stakeholders, Support Center, and the public
- 8) validate effectiveness of the Laboratory and the M&O Contractor management systems
- 9) provide guidance and direction to the Laboratory and the M&O Contractor

Site Office Managers must rely on their staff, the technical expertise within the Support Center, and the HQ-SC Program Offices to assist them in achieving the “Sense of the Laboratory.” The Site Office Managers and their staff achieve a “Sense of the Laboratory” by performing, participating in, and/or observing the following types of activities:

- 1) regular meetings with Laboratory/Contractor Management to discuss status, progress, opportunities, and issues concerning Laboratory administration, operations, programs, and projects
- 2) direct communications with HQ-SC Program Offices to identify issues, needs, and concerns and to receive feedback on Laboratory performance
- 3) institutional and strategic planning for the Laboratory
- 4) reviews (including peer reviews) of Laboratory administration, operations, programs, and projects
- 5) HQ-SC Program Office and other HQ Program Office meetings and discussions with the Laboratory management and staff
- 6) operational awareness activities, such as inspections, meetings, reviews, audits, and facility representative walkthroughs
- 7) meetings with federal, state, and local regulators and other stakeholders concerning activities at the Laboratory
- 8) review and approve Laboratory Systems, as necessary
- 9) participate in SC on-site reviews

4) What is the role of the Office of Science Program Associate Directors in achieving a “Sense of the Laboratory”?

The SC Program Associate Directors are a key participant in the development and understanding of a “Sense of the Laboratory”. The Program Associate Directors are responsible for ensuring the quality and future direction of their science portfolio at the SC Laboratories. Having a “Sense of the Laboratory” enables the SC Program Associate Directors to successfully achieve the following assigned SC HQ roles:

- 1) Seek Funding – perform planning; identify priorities; prepare and defend budget requests
- 2) Establish Policy Program – develop approaches and principles to be followed by the Site Offices and the Laboratories in the conduct of the SC work
- 3) Develop Direction and Guidance – develop strategies, procedures, and controls to ensure that SC needs are being met
- 4) Facilitate and Ensure Execution – work with the Laboratory and the Site Offices to ensure that program requirements and expectations are being achieved

The following examples are functions that the SC Program Associate Directors perform that contribute to the “Sense of the Laboratory” and to ensure that roles of the SC Program Associate Directors can be successfully achieved:

- 1) develop strategic planning for their scientific program responsibilities. This includes specific scientific programs, level of funding, and new facility construction that they will support at each of the SC Laboratories
- 2) establish expectations for those who perform the scientific work
- 3) determine appropriate direction or changes in direction for supported scientific work
- 4) evaluate those who perform the scientific work
- 5) participate in the review of the effectiveness and efficiency of Lab operations

- 6) provide information on the supported science programs to the site office that may impact the sense of the Laboratory
- 7) receive information from the Site Offices that impact the management of the Science Programs

Developing and communicating the “Sense of the Laboratory” to the Director of the Office of Science strongly relies on a close working relationship between the Site Office Manager and the appropriate SC Program Associate Director(s). Specific agreements can also be developed to further define expectations and delegations between the Site Offices and SC Program Offices, where necessary.

5) What are the SC Expectations for the Laboratories?

SC has identified the following formal list of high-level performance expectations for the ten SC Laboratories:

- 1) Science and Technology – perform and support outstanding science and technology. Develop and support leading edge enabling technologies that are critical to the DOE program sponsor needs and the Nation.
- 2) Leadership – provide leadership that ensures excellence, relevance, and stewardship in all aspects of the conduct of program activities.
- 3) ES&H – ensure the safety and health of the workforce and members of the public and the protection of the environment in all program activities.
- 4) Infrastructure – maintain the infrastructure to support operations in a safe, environmentally responsible, and cost-effective manner.
- 5) Business Operations – use efficient and effective corporate management systems and approaches to guide decision-making, streamline and improve operations, align resources and reduce costs, and improve the delivery of products and services.
- 6) Stakeholder Relations – be a good neighbor. Work with the customers, stakeholders, and neighbors in an open, frank, and constructive manner.

The performance-based contracts for the SC Laboratories contains the formal SC expectations for each of the respective SC Laboratories. Every year these expectations are re-negotiated and the contract revised accordingly. These expectations include formal program direction, which is provided periodically by HQ Program Offices to the Contracting Officer, who issues it as part of a Laboratory contract modification. Communications with the Laboratory by other DOE personnel acting within the scope of their duties also occurs (e.g. to exchange programmatic information or facilitate successful research or project performance) but these communications do not alter any contractual provision or obligation.